

2-1 Why Japanese Corporations Employ International Students

These are several main things that Japanese employers are expecting of international students.

Expected Roles

① “Borderless Professionals”

First of all, employers hire international students to secure excellent human resources without regard to their nationality.

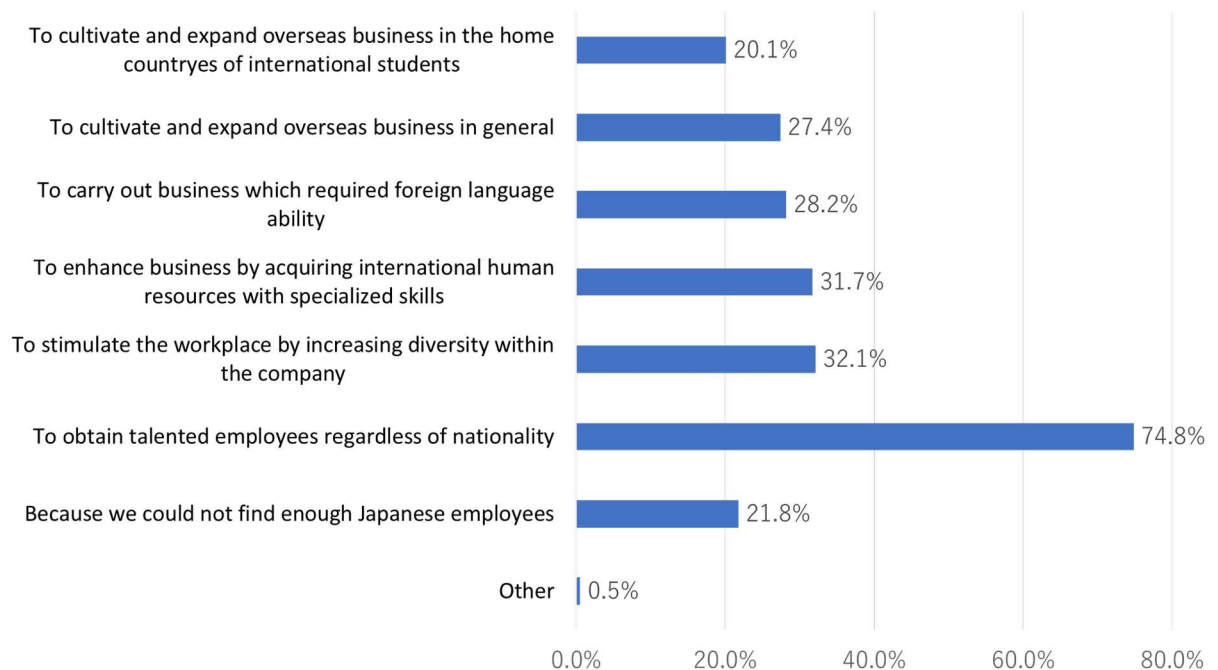
② “Bridge” between Japan and Foreign Markets

Japanese companies opt to hire international students when they are considering taking or expanding their operations overseas. They see the need for the help of coordinators who work as liaisons between their headquarters and local subsidiaries. Foreign students, who are equipped with not just language skills (Japanese and their mother tongue) but also cultural competence in both Japan and the target country, are expected to provide support to facilitate smooth business development. Both employment in Japanese headquarters and direct employment in local subsidiary (national staff) are available. For national staff, local rules and regulations will apply.

③ Corporate Revitalization from Within

It is also a major expectation from an employer that securing human resources with different cultural backgrounds will stimulate their organization by having international talents. Foreigners are encouraged to provide an international perspective (e.g. expressing ideas, work-life balance, paternity leave) to the workplace. Employers also hope that the presence of foreign staff will energize the working environment, thus improving efficiency.

Reasons for Hiring International Students



Source: DISCO Career Research December 2020

<https://www.disc.co.jp/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2020kigyuu-global-report.pdf>

Expected Skills

① Language Proficiency (JLPT N1, N2)

Most Japanese companies require foreign employees to have adequate Japanese as a very fundamental and essential skill for engaging in their daily business operations as well as communication among/beyond the organization. To prevent miscommunication in the daily work, applicants are strongly encouraged to learn and speak the language well. Business-level proficiency is generally required of regular full-time employees working in Japan. In addition to one's mother tongue and Japanese (at least, JLPT N2 Level. N1 is highly preferred), English is also widely expected. Employees assigned to work at local subsidiaries must also be able to communicate proficiently in Japanese to fulfill their responsibilities as intermediaries.

② Adaptability to Corporate Culture/Sense of Teamwork

Employers are also concerned as to whether international students have the capability to understand the business culture in Japan, their corporate culture, and the workstyles or ways of thinking of Japanese people as represented by “sense of teamwork.”

③ Specialized Knowledge & Practical Major

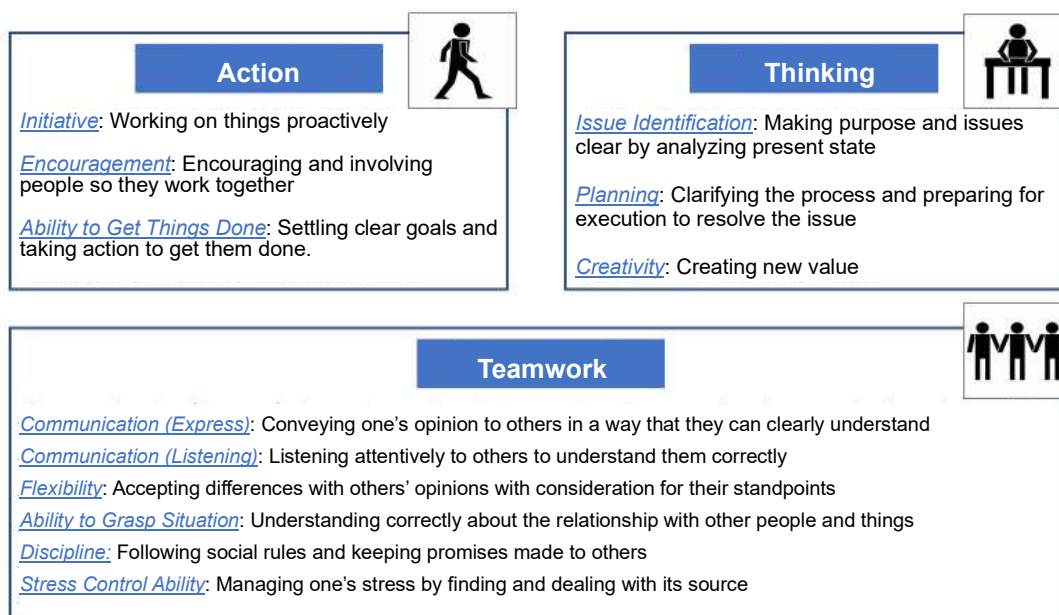
Particular industries or jobs such as manufacturing, chemical/biotechnology, R&D, marketing, and finance, require not only international students but also domestic students to possess specific expertise or an academic degree in a practical major.

Basic Social Skills for University Students

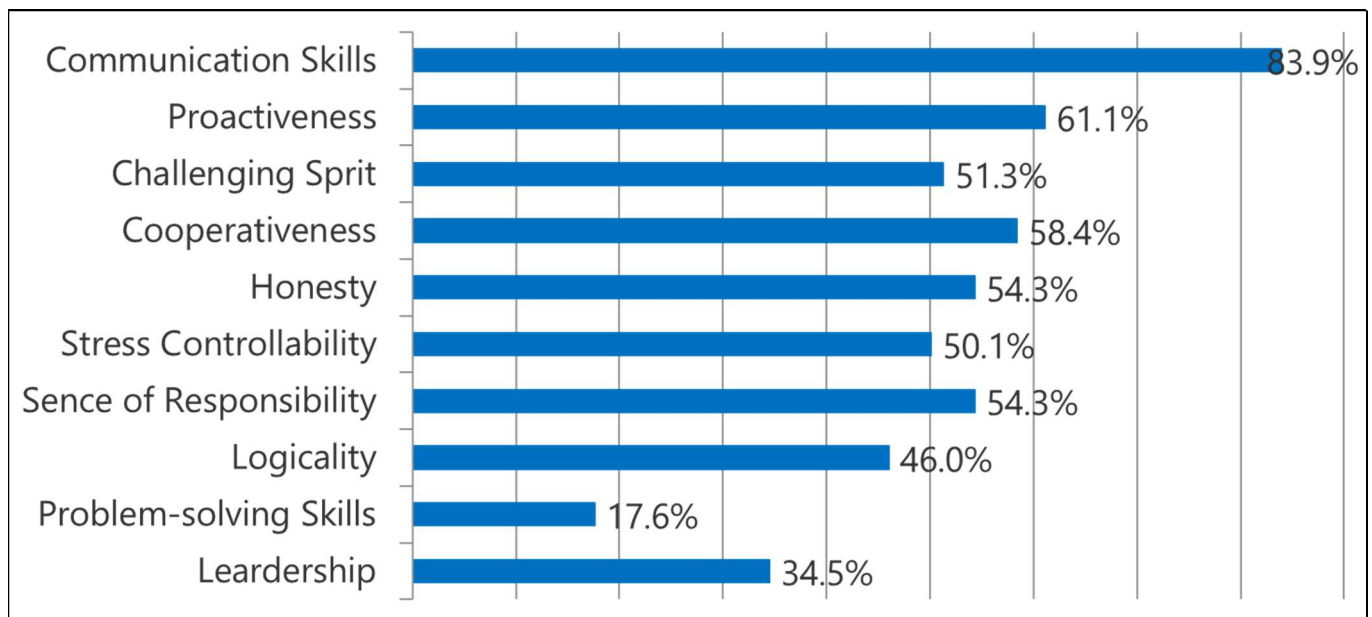
Basic social skills are fundamental prerequisites for all university students to work in the real world by collaborating with people both in the workplace and in society, as has been expressed by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry based on an investigation of Japanese industries on their needs and requirements for future talents.

Japanese employers examine whether their candidates possess these basic skills through various steps and methods during their selection process.

Basic Social Skills



TOP 10 Evaluation Points by Employers



Source: DISCO Career Research December 2020

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2-2 Characteristics of Job Hunting in Japan

What is important for international students who are interested in seeking employment in Japan is to understand what job hunting in Japan is all about and the importance of acting independently.

① Mass Recruitment of New Graduates for Entry in April

The term “recruitment of new graduates (*shin-sotsu saiyo*)” refers to the employment of people who graduated recently from university and who are seeking employment for the first time. It is the most unique part of employment in Japan that employers all hire a group of new graduates simultaneously on April 1st on an annually basis, and all run their selection procedures within almost the same timeline. Based on that, job-hunting activities are usually started earlier in Japan than overseas, so students need to be well aware of timelines and prepare for them whilst maintain a balance with academic life.

Please refer to “3 Job-Hunting Schedule (☞P. 19)” for the general timeline.

② Various Selection Methods, Multiple Stages

Employers require applicants to undergo various selection processes, not simply job interviews but also written examinations, online tests, aptitude tests, Japanese essays, group interviews and role-play tests or “group discussions.” Students may experience a relatively long period of selection procedures due to the need to go through such multiple stages of examinations, and of course to prepare for them.

Please refer to “4 Work to Be Done (☞P. 25)” for more information about how to prepare for each selection stage.